

Planning and Development Committee,

For consideration during the public hearing to be held on March 22, 2021, I would register my support for H.B. No. 6642 "AN ACT CONCERNING A STUDY OF ACCESS TO MUNICIPAL-OWNED BEACHES AND PARKS ADJACENT TO MARINE OR TIDAL WATERS". Beaches and the Long Island Sound are one of the greatest natural assets that our state has and they should be available to all residents. Many towns have implemented restrictions in the form of fees and limited parking to discourage non-residents from accessing our natural resources. I would also encourage the committee to expand the scope of the study to look at all restrictions to access to the public lands below the high water line. Because too much of our shoreline is owned by private landowners, there is not enough public access. And even in areas where there is access, many of these same property owners and towns make it difficult to access public land that is the right of all citizens.

Michael Bender
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